

U.S. Embassy Bahrain

Emergency Message to U.S. Citizens – March 13, 2013

Thursday, March 14, 2013, the U.S. Embassy anticipates widespread demonstration activities outside of the unauthorized areas during the peak commute hours. The morning hours may be particularly affected. We recommend strongly that U.S. citizens limit travel to essential purposes only. The U.S. Embassy is advising its personnel to avoid non-essential travel between March 13 and March 15 and will require only essential Embassy personnel to report to work tomorrow morning.

The U.S. Embassy anticipates heightened anti-government demonstrations could well continue through March 16. These activities may include increased demonstrations, attempts to disrupt traffic using construction material debris, homemade tire spikes and tire fires, demonstrations near economic centers, throwing of Molotov cocktails, and the use of improvised explosive devices. The possibility for clashes to take place between government forces and the demonstrators is higher during this time period.

On March 15, 2013, between 3:00 (1500) and 3:45pm (1545), a demonstration has been planned from the Roundabout in Jidhafs to the Sh. Aziz Mosque in Sehla. U.S. citizens should anticipate traffic congestion and police activity leading into the Sehla area. (Yellow Oval)

Spontaneous demonstrations take place in Bahrain from time to time in response to world events or local developments. United States citizens should keep current with media coverage of local events and be aware of their surroundings at all times. If you encounter a large public gathering or demonstration, depart the vicinity immediately.

The U.S. Embassy reminds all U.S. citizens that there may be increased demonstrations, attempts to disrupt traffic, demonstrations near economic centers, suspicious packages planted, tire fires and additional clashes against police during the time period from February 20, 2013 to March 31, 2013.

While there have been no direct threats or attacks on U.S. citizens to date, it is strongly recommended that you maintain constant awareness of your surroundings. Violent protests do pose a risk to U.S. citizens who may inadvertently find themselves in the vicinity of an active demonstration. If you encounter a large public gathering or demonstration, depart the area immediately and notify the police at 999. While we are aware of the above, it is important to note that spontaneous demonstrations have also been triggered by regional events in the past; however, there have been no direct attacks on U.S. citizens in Bahrain. That said, spontaneous and at times violent anti-government demonstrations occur in some neighborhoods, particularly at night and on weekends. These demonstrations have included blockades of major highways with burning debris and establishment of unofficial checkpoints. Participants have thrown rocks and Molotov cocktails and used various other homemade weapons, including isolated use of improvised explosive devices. The Ministry of Interior maintains official checkpoints in some areas and routinely uses tear gas and stun grenades along with birdshot and other crowd control measures against demonstrators. Violent clashes between security forces and demonstrators can make travel in and around Bahrain dangerous without advance warning.

Please see below for a map. Areas shaded in red are off-limits to U.S. Citizen Embassy employees and their family members. Areas shaded in blue are off-limits to U.S. Citizen Embassy employees and their family members 20:00 – 04:00.

We remind U.S. citizens that even demonstrations intended to be peaceful can turn confrontational and possibly escalate into violence. U.S. citizens are therefore urged to avoid the areas of demonstrations if possible, and to exercise caution if within the vicinity of any demonstrations.

For the latest security information, U.S. citizens living and traveling abroad should regularly monitor the Department of State's Bureau of Consular Affairs Internet website at <http://travel.state.gov>, where the current Worldwide Caution, Country Specific Information for Bahrain, Travel Warnings and Travel Alerts can be found. Up-to-date information on security can also be obtained by calling 1-888-407-4747 toll-free in the United States and Canada or, for callers outside the United States and Canada, a regular toll line at 1-202-501-4444. These numbers are available from 8:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. Eastern Time, Monday through Friday (except U.S. federal holidays). For further information, please consult the [Bureau of Consular Affairs](#) Internet website at <http://travel.state.gov> where the [Worldwide Caution](#) and [Country Specific Information](#) can be found. In addition, the Embassy encourages U.S. citizens to review "[A Safe Trip Abroad](#)," which includes valuable security

information for those traveling or living in foreign countries. You can also follow the Bureau of Consular Affairs on [Twitter](#) and on [Facebook](#).

The U.S. Embassy in Manama can be reached at (973) 1724-2700; the afterhours emergency number is (973) 1724-2957; the fax number is (973) 1725-6242. The [Embassy's web site](http://bahrain.usembassy.gov), <http://bahrain.usembassy.gov>, includes travel information and the Worldwide Caution and Demonstration Notices. All U.S. citizens are encouraged to enroll in the Smart Traveler Enrollment Program. The Consular Section can be reached at ManamaConsular@state.gov.

